

Song, dance duo have upbeat style

The blend of Mark Graham's dance music and Sandy Silva's explosive, intricate percussion make the duo on the cutting edge of traditional American music and dance.

Graham has played Southern dance music with the Chicken Chokers of Boston and the Hurricane Ridgerunners of Seattle, among others. Combining a rich baritone voice with a dark sense of humor, Graham has become a writer and singer of such strange songs as "I Can See Your Aura and it's Ugly," and "Their Brains Were Small and They Died."

Silva's dancing is so complex and visually commanding that some have called her a "foot percussionist." She combines elements of Southern style flatfooting, clogging tap and stepdancing in her performances. She has developed a keen rhythmic awareness from her further studies in African drumming and dancing, modern dance, Middle Eastern drumming and Irish bodhran drumming.

"I've tried to be a foot percussionist who has a respect-



Sandy Silva and Mark Graham will combine their talents in a performance at Saturday's Folk Festival.

ful eye on the past, but who constantly pushes the tradition to its limits and beyond," Silva said. "I've gotten excited

about off-beat syncopations, but I'm also going back to basics. Simple is really beautiful."

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